

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 MILAN 00049 121931Z
ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSCE-00 INR-05 CIAE-00 NSAE-00
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S E C R E T MILAN 0049

LIMDIS

EO 11652: XGDS-1 JAN 88
TAGS: IT PINT
SUBJECT: MONTANELLI SEES BLOOD AHEAD

1. I MET WITH GIORNALE EDITOR MONTANELLI AFTERNOON JAN 12
BOTH TO COMPLAIN AGAIN ABOUT LATEST CHARGES US AMBIGUITY ON PCI
AND TO LEARN WHAT HIS TACTICS ARE.
2. MONTANELLI WAS IN PLEASANT GRIM MOOD. HE FELT THAT HIS
CAMPAIGN HAD FORCED US TO TAKE TOUGHER STAND. HE HAD, HE SAID, REPOR
T
FROM WASHINGTON ON AMBASSADOR'S PRESENTATIONS AND FROM DETAIL
HE GAVE, IT SOUNDED SUBSTANTIALLY LIKELY. EXCEPT THAT
AMBASSADOR'S ANSWER TO FANFANI DEMARCHE LEFT IMPRESSION THAT
AMBASSADOR HAD NOT REPEATED FIRM US OPPOSITION. I ENERGETICALLY
DISPUTED THIS BUT MONTANELLI HAD HIS OWN MOTIVES TO DOUBT US.
3. WHAT WAS HIS VIEW OF SITUATION? STONEWALLING PCI DEMANDS
WAS, SURPRISINGLY, SHOWING SIGNS OF SUCCESS, HE SAID.
HE HAD MOUNTED CAMPAIGN IN DC WITH MAZZOTTA AND HAD BEEN
MORE SUCCESSFUL THAN EXPECTED. HE WAS BLACKMAILING DC MP'S BY
PUBLISHING NAMES OF THOSE SUBSCRIBING TO ANTI-CONCEUNION POSITION.
NOW DC LEADERSHIP HAD BEEN FORCED TO PULL BACK. MORO HAD SENT
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FORLANI TO ASK HIM TO LAY OFF FOR FEAR OF SPLITTING DC. BUT
MONTANELLI HAD REFUSED SAYING HE WAS PUTTING ON MORE HEAT.

4. IF, SAID MONTANELLI, DC AND US ET AL REFUSE CONCESSIONS TO
PCI, EITHER IT WILL BACK DOWN OR ELECTIONS WILL BE INEVITABLE.
5. AFTERNOON NEWS FROM ROME SUGGESTED PCI SIGNS OF BACKING

DOWN. IF THAT WAS REAL AND NOT TACTICAL, BERLINGUER WOULD BE OUSTED AND "TRUE" COMMUNIST TAKE OVER LEADERSHIP WITH RETURN TO HARD LINE. THAT WAS EXACTLY WHAT MONTANELLI WANTED.

6. IF PCI REFUSED TO BACK DOWN ELECTIONS WOULD TAKE PLACE PROBABLY IN MAY. RESULT WOULD BE DECIMATION OF MINOR LAY PARTIES AND PSI. TOO BAD BUT UNAVOIDABLE ALTHOUGH GIORNALE WOULD BACK LIBERAL-ORIENTED GROUP OF PSDI, PRI, PSI DISSIDENTS. DC MIGHT REACH 42 PERCENT. IF PCI GAINED ONE OR TWO POINTS, PRESENT SITUATION MUCH WORSENERD WOULD RESULT.

7. MONTANELLI, HOWEVER, EXPECTS PCI TO LOSE ONE OR TWO POINTS. IN THAT CASE, BERLINGUER WOULD BE OUSTED AND PCI RETURN TO HARD LINE WHICH HE WANTS TO HAVE HAPPEN.

8. HOWEVER PCI RETURNS TO HARD LINE, NEXT STEP WILL BE CIVIL CONFLICT IN WHICH PCI WILL BE DESTROYED. BLOOD WILL FLOW. IT WILL BE HARD FOR ALL. BUT PCI WILL BE DEFEATED.

9. WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO ITALIAN DEMOCRACY? THAT, SAID MONTANELLI, IS A MYSTERY. MAYBE ITALY WILL HAVE A PINOCHET TYPE DEMOCRACY. THAT WOULD BE ONE HELLUVA SIGHT BETTER THAN A PCI GOVERNMENT (EXCLAMATION). AS FAR AS MONTANELLI WAS CONCERNED, AN AUTHORITARIAN GOVERNMENT OF THE RIGHTHOULD BE LESS UNDESIRABLE THAN ONE OF THE COMMUNISTS.

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10. IN SHORT, SAID MONTANELLI, ITALY WAS NOW IN THE CRUNCH. HE WAS ENCOURAGED THAT HIS CAMPAIGN TO STONEWALL THE COMMUNISTS WAS BEGINNING TO PAY OFF. HE DIDN'T RELISH BLOOD IN THE STREET. BET HE WAS ALSO PREPARED TO SEE IT RATHER THAN CAVE IN.FINA

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